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When a bird dives from a powerline, it lands on its feet

Sally Cannon

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When a bird dives from a powerline, it lands on its feet

Poetry • Sally Cannon

My chest, it never stops hurting me
these days, like a bird growing but not quite
ready (read willing) to fracture its shell.
Somehow the pecking at my ribcage takes

second place, though, to the lake of tar—that
weight in my bloodstream, coagulating.
The birds use it to cement their nests to
my spinal cord, wingbeats making waves in

my stomach. Maybe that's why I can't sleep
or why when my eyes crack open I can't
wait to go back to bed—her pursed lips dam
the flowing flowing flowing of symptoms—

*Maybe this is all just inside your head
she says, Come back soon if nothing changes*